

Neighborly Apologetics

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Jesus and the Resurrection, Part 2

Del Tackett on Ancient Promises, Prophecies, and the Claims of Jesus

(Thumbnail Sketch from Del Tackett's Webinar, [May 2, 2023](#))

In the fifth session of Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar series, originally broadcast on May 2, 2023, participants explored "The Claims of Jesus and the Resurrection, Part 2." Facilitated by Marc Fey, the webinar did not rush into the resurrection itself. Instead, Tackett built a foundational case for why first-century Jews—and thoughtful people today—had every reason to expect a coming Messiah. Drawing from the broader Neighborly Apologetics framework, Tackett reminded listeners that the goal is far more than academic knowledge. It is relational preparation. Christian families are called to love their neighbors as themselves, pray consistently for them, and build genuine friendships so that, when a neighbor's worldview collapses under life's big questions, believers are ready with gracious, evidence-based answers about Jesus.

Tackett opened by acknowledging the session's scope: there was simply "an awful lot to go through," and the material might need to stretch into two parts. He thanked attendees for carving out time and quickly reviewed the series' purpose. Neighborly Apologetics flows from the Posthumous for the Engagement Project, which recognizes that God has entrusted the primary work of cultural engagement to ordinary Christian families. Families teach their children why they live where they do and why neighbors like "Mrs. Smith across the street" are there by divine appointment. Through acts of kindness, mercy, and joy, relationships deepen until natural opportunities arise to speak truth. The webinar series had already tackled "Does God exist?" and "Is the Bible reliable?" Now it turned to the pivotal question: Who is Jesus? This session focused on the promises and prophecies that created widespread Messianic expectation, setting the stage for later discussions of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

The expectation of the Messiah was no vague cultural longing born from Roman oppression. It rested on concrete, centuries-old divine promises. Tackett highlighted Jesus' own words in Revelation—"I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star"—and Matthew's opening line: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Paul repeatedly called Jesus the "descendant of David" (Romans 1; 2 Timothy 2). Crowds cried out to Jesus as "Son of David" when seeking healing: the blind men, the Canaanite woman, blind Bartimaeus, and the multitudes after other miracles. This title was never about superior genetics. It pointed to unbreakable covenants. God promised Abraham that "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" through him (Genesis 12). To David He swore, "The fruit of your body I will set upon your throne... I will establish your seed forever and build up your throne to all generations" (Psalm 89). Pharisees, common people, and even Revelation's elder knew the Messiah must come from David's line, from Bethlehem, and from the tribe of Judah—the Lion who would prevail.

This genealogical thread reached far deeper than Abraham or David. Tackett traced it back to the garden of Eden. After humanity's rebellion turned a perfect world into one of evil, suffering, and "always winter," God did not annihilate creation. Instead, He breathed out the first gospel—the protoevangelium. Speaking to the serpent, God declared, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel" (Genesis 3:15). This cryptic promise launched a cosmic war between the seed of the woman and the seed of Satan. The entire Old Testament unfolds as that conflict. Time after time the satanic seed line seemed victorious—conquest, deportation, temple destruction—yet God preserved the promised line. The Messiah could not appear from any family tree; He had to emerge from this specific scarlet thread.

Matthew and Luke's genealogies confirm the fulfillment. Matthew traces the royal line forward from Abraham through David's son Solomon to Jesus. Luke traces the biological line backward from Jesus through David's son Nathan all the way to Adam. Though the lines diverge after David, they converge to prove Jesus was truly the Son of David and the seed of the woman. Tackett noted the family tree was hardly impressive by worldly standards—it included prostitutes, adulterers, liars, murderers, idolaters, and polygamists. Yet in Jesus the garden mysteries were finally revealed: the seed of the woman, the seed of Satan, the heel bruise, and the head-crushing victory.

After surveying the promises, Tackett turned to the prophecies—roughly fifty from a conservative count, up to four hundred according to others. Examples abound: the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, His hands and feet pierced, none of His bones broken, soldiers would gamble for His clothes, He would be buried with the rich, and His body would not decay. Many pointed directly to the events of crucifixion and resurrection. To illustrate their persuasive power, Tackett introduced Jewish-born Louis Lapidès, once hostile to Jesus and Christianity. Lapidès studied the prophecies and was overwhelmed by the evidence that Jesus fulfilled them all. In his book **The Fingerprint of the Messiah**, Lapidès argued that the Old Testament laid down an exact "fingerprint" of the coming One, and Jesus matched it perfectly. Tackett played a clip from Lapidès, who emphasized passages like Isaiah 53—the suffering servant "wounded for our transgressions" upon whom "the iniquity of us all" fell—and Zechariah 12:10, where Israel looks on the One they have pierced and mourns in repentance. Traditional Jewish interpretation long viewed these as Messianic. Lapidès' conversion, born of intellectual honesty rather than emotion, underscored the prophecies' compelling nature.

Modern skepticism toward prophecy, however, runs deep, fueled by centuries of false predictions. Tackett catalogued a sobering list: Julius Africanus (c. 500), the turn-of-the-millennium Armageddon expectations involving Pope and Charlemagne, Pope Innocent III (1284), Mother Shipton (1881/1884), William Miller's repeated 1844 failures that sent thousands to the mountains, Jehovah's Witnesses' multiple dates (1914–1975), Edgar Whisenant's 4.5-million-copy **88 Reasons** book (1988 and revisions), Hal Lindsey's shifting end-time scenarios, the Heaven's Gate mass suicide (1997), and the Mayan calendar doomsday (2012). Each failure illustrates Deuteronomy 18's high standard: if a prophet's word does not come true, the Lord has not spoken it. People therefore dismiss all prophecy, including the biblical kind. Yet Tackett countered common objections to Messianic prophecy. Were they written after the fact? The Dead Sea Scrolls refute that. Did Jesus self-fulfill them with a "Messianic complex"? Many prophecies—birthplace, betrayal price, soldiers gambling, bones unbroken, side pierced—were beyond His control. Are they cherry-picked out of context? Careful study shows otherwise.

The statistical case is especially powerful. Dr. Peter Stoner's ten-year study with students calculated the odds of one person fulfilling just eight listed prophecies: born in Bethlehem, preceded by a

messenger, entering Jerusalem on a colt, betrayed by a friend for thirty pieces of silver, the silver thrown into the temple, not speaking in His own defense, hands and feet pierced. The result? One in one hundred quadrillion. For forty-eight prophecies the number becomes literally astronomical—Stoner illustrated it with electron-filled spheres spanning billions of light-years. Josh McDowell identifies sixty-one indisputably Messianic prophecies. Jesus fulfilled them all. As Tackett noted, this is no coincidence or fabrication. On the road to Emmaus, the risen Jesus rebuked two disciples for being “slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken” and then “beginning with Moses and all the prophets... interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luke 24:25-27). The scarlet thread from Eden to the New Testament converges perfectly on Jesus of Nazareth.

Yet Tackett insisted the greatest obstacle is not evidential. “The evidence is too strong. It is too powerful. That’s never been the problem... The problem is a moral problem. The problem is a heart problem.” Therefore, Neighborly Apologetics insists on prayer. Believers must ask God to open neighbors’ eyes, soften hearts, and unstop ears so questions arise. When they do, answers must be ready—loving, gracious, winsome, and truthful.

The webinar culminated in the wonder of divine timing. Galatians 4:4 declares, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman.” This was no opportunistic moment but a sovereign Kairos climax. Isaiah 46 reveals God declaring “the end from the beginning” and accomplishing all His purposes. Even the stars, set in place “for signs and seasons” at creation, aligned for this event. Malachi closed the Old Testament promising Elijah before the great day—then four hundred years of revelatory silence descended. Tackett likened it to the dramatic pause in Handel’s **Messiah** before the Hallelujah Chorus: instruments silent, tension building. Suddenly heaven exploded with angels, dreams, visions, stars, and miracles: John leaping in the womb, Zechariah struck dumb, Magi guided, Simeon holding the infant Messiah. The seed of the woman had come.

Throughout history God preserved that seed line against idolatry, conquest, and satanic assault. Remnants endured—never bowing to Baal, surviving Babylonian exile. Even when the nation seemed destroyed, “the holy seed is in its stump” (Isaiah 6:13). From the stump of Jesse a shoot would arise. Tackett urged modern believers to see themselves as a remnant in a post-Christian culture. Hope is never lost because fulfillment depends on God, not flawed humanity. Even when “it is always winter,” the Conductor waits for the exact moment. Then the music bursts forth: “For unto us a child is born... and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Tackett concluded by previewing the next session on Jesus’ life and death—further confirmation of the Messianic claims. He stopped sharing his screen, thanked participants, and prayed. The prayer thanked God for revealing Himself in Scripture and history, for the Messiah’s coming, and for the privilege of being witnesses. It asked for hunger to speak of Christ, diligence in prayer and friendship-building, and openings to share truth with the lost—all for God’s glory.

Del Tackett’s webinar masterfully weaves promises, prophecies, statistics, history, and theology into a compelling case that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah. The evidence is overwhelming; the real issue is the heart. For those practicing Neighborly Apologetics, the call is clear: pray, love, build relationships, and be ready. The same God who preserved the seed line through millennia still works in the “fullness of time”—including ours. As Tackett reminded listeners, hope is never lost. The Conductor is still directing the score, and the Hallelujah Chorus has only just begun. [back to top](#)

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In the fifth session of Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar (May 2, 2023), Tackett examined the promises and prophecies pointing to Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. Facilitated by Marc Fey, the teaching emphasized relational preparation: Christians are called to love neighbors, pray for them, and build genuine friendships so they can graciously answer questions about Jesus when worldviews fail.

Tackett showed that Messianic expectation was not a vague hope born of Roman oppression but rested on specific divine covenants. From Genesis 12 and Psalm 89, God promised Abraham that all families of the earth would be blessed and swore to David that his descendant would sit on the throne forever. Jesus, Matthew, Luke, and Paul repeatedly highlight Jesus as the "Son of David." Crowds cried out to Him with this title during healings. The genealogies in Matthew (royal line through Solomon) and Luke (biological line through Nathan back to Adam) confirm Jesus fulfilled this thread, which began in Eden.

In the garden, after humanity's fall, God gave the protoevangelium: the seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). The Old Testament unfolds as a war between the seed of Satan and the seed of the Messiah. Despite conquest and exile, God preserved the line. Tackett noted the family tree included flawed people—prostitutes, murderers, idolaters—yet in Jesus the ancient mysteries were revealed.

Prophecies added overwhelming evidence. Roughly fifty to four hundred passages foretold details such as birth in Bethlehem, pierced hands and feet, unbroken bones, and burial with the rich. Jewish scholar Louis Lapidus, once hostile to Christianity, converted after studying how Jesus perfectly matched the "fingerprint of the Messiah," especially in Isaiah 53 and Zechariah 12:10. Dr. Peter Stoner's study calculated the odds of fulfilling just eight prophecies as one in 10^{17} —one hundred quadrillion. Jesus fulfilled them all, including those beyond His control.

Tackett stressed the obstacle is not evidential but moral—a heart problem. Believers must pray for neighbors and respond winsomely when questions arise. Galatians 4:4 captures the divine timing: "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son." After 400 years of silence, heaven erupted with angels and miracles at the birth of the seed of the woman.

The scarlet thread from Eden converges on Jesus of Nazareth—the root and offspring of David. Hope remains because God sovereignly preserves His promises. Christians, as a remnant today, can trust the Conductor who brings forth life even from the stump.

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